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C O N F I D E N T I A L AMMAN 002753

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SUBJECT: FINANCE MINISTER REVIEWS STATUS OF OIL GRANTS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires David Hale for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) In a March 30 meeting with Charge, Finance Minister Mohammed Abu Hammour reviewed the likelihood of Jordan's receipt of oil grants in 2005. Abu Hammour noted that during the most recent visit by King Abdullah to Saudi Arabia in early March, the Saudis had promised to grant Jordan 25,000 barrels per day in free crude for the next twelve months. He also stated that the United Arab Emirates had promised a cash grant of \$200 million to help cover fuel costs, but that there had been no commitment from the Kuwaitis. Abu Hammour added, however, that he had not given in to Prime Minister Faisal al-Fayez's request that Abu Hammour authorize more spending from the general budget now that these commitments had been made. Jordan's experience, said Abu Hammour, had taught it the folly of relying on promises of aid from GCC countries - in 2003, for example, the UAE had promised 25,000 barrels per day of free crude for a period of three months, but only delivered it for two months. Abu Hammour pledged that he would release no funds for extra spending until the promised monies actually came in.

[1](#)2. (C) COMMENT: If this information is accurate, the Saudis are offering half of the daily free crude they provided throughout 2003 and 2004. The UAE's promised cash grant is substantially larger than that granted in 2004 by Kuwait (UAE did not provide any direct grant aid to the GOJ in 2004).
HALE